DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 313 UD 031 120

AUTHOR	Lewis, Dan A.; Nakagawa, Kathryn
TITLE	Race and Educational Reform in the American Metropolis: A Study of School Decentralization. SUNY Series, Frontiers in Education.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-7914-2134-1
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	226p.
AVAILABLE FROM	State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246 (paperback: ISBN-0-7914-2134-1, $16.95; clothbound: ISBN-0-7914-2133-3, $49.50).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Black Students; *Decentralization; Democracy; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; Parent Attitudes; Parent Participation; Racial Discrimination; School Segregation; *Urban Education; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	African Americans; *Chicago Public Schools IL; *Reform Efforts

ABSTRACT

This book addresses the American Dilemma, the reality of segregation in a country that claims adherence to the principles of equality and democracy. Segregation is viewed as fostering decentralization in the educational system; this decentralization subordinates African Americans in the competition for educational resources while legitimizing that subordination in terms of equality and power. The first chapter sets out the foundation of school decentralization through the ideological prism of inclusion and deinstitutionalization. Chapter 2 contrasts the theoretical framework growing from this foundation with past analyses of decentralization, and Chapters 3 and 4 develop these themes in more detail. Chapter 3 focuses largely on decentralization in New York City and Detroit (Michigan), and chapter 4 looks at Los Angeles (California) and Dade County (Florida). Chapters 5 through 8 look at Chicago (Illinois) to demonstrate how school decentralization supports the status quo. Particular attention is paid to school reform efforts and the attitudes of parents. Chapter 9 concludes with a discussion of the implications of current forms of decentralization for race relations and the improvement of urban education. An appendix discusses data collection in the five cities highlighted. (Contains 19 tables, one appendix table, and 164 references.) (SLD)

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